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Lo que conduce a la paz: llevar al mundo a la reconciliación y la unidad

*“¡Oh, si conocieras tú también, por lo menos en este tu día, lo que conduce a tu paz!
Pero ahora está encubierto a tus ojos”. (Lucas 19:42)*

Reunidos en la 11ª Asamblea del Consejo Mundial de Iglesias (CMI) en Karlsruhe (Alemania), casi tres años después de la aparición de la pandemia de la COVID-19, debemos reconocer con profundo dolor y consternación que la violencia y los conflictos siguen afectando a las comunidades vulnerables, sobre todo a los ancianos, las mujeres, los niños y los jóvenes.

La vida y la labor del CMI desde la 10ª Asamblea de Busan se han enmarcado en una “peregrinación de justicia y paz”, basándose principalmente en el “[Llamado ecuménico a la paz justa](#)” y la “[Declaración sobre el camino de la paz justa](#)” de la Asamblea de Busan. Esta última describe la paz justa como “un viaje hacia el propósito de Dios para toda la humanidad y toda la creación”, y expresa su visión en cuatro dimensiones: la paz justa en la comunidad, la paz justa con la tierra, la paz justa en el mercado y la paz justa entre las naciones.

Nos reunimos en un momento de nueva intensificación de la polarización mundial, reconfiguración de la gobernanza y los alineamientos geopolíticos, división, confrontación y militarización, así como de ocupación militar permanente en lugares como Chipre y los territorios palestinos ocupados, con todos los terribles riesgos que este contexto conlleva. En la comunidad ecuménica, existe una gran preocupación por la instrumentalización del lenguaje, la autoridad y el liderazgo religiosos para justificar, apoyar o “bendecir” la agresión armada o cualquier tipo de violencia y opresión, algo en acusado contraste con la vocación cristiana de ser pacificadores y que entra en contradicción con los principios ecuménicos fundamentales.

Entendemos que hacer la paz requiere hacer frente al racismo, la xenofobia, el antisemitismo, los discursos de odio y otras formas de discriminación (problemas todos ellos que han aumentado y se han visto intensificados durante estos últimos años, en gran parte atizados por los movimientos nacionalistas populistas); la crisis y la competencia por los recursos esenciales para la vida; la injusticia económica y la desigualdad en el mercado; los conflictos interestatales y el resurgimiento de la guerra; y el espectro de la guerra nuclear.

Estas amenazas a la paz vulneran radicalmente los principios fundamentales de la fe cristiana. El llamado al diálogo, el encuentro y la búsqueda del entendimiento mutuo constituyen la esencia misma del ecumenismo y un elemento central de la construcción de la paz. Es el deber de las iglesias encarnar “*el amor de Cristo [que] lleva al mundo a la reconciliación y la unidad*”.

Por lo tanto, la 11ª Asamblea del CMI:

Afirma la exigencia de decir la verdad profética y **reconoce** la necesidad acuciante de establecer un profundo diálogo renovado en el movimiento ecuménico sobre las implicaciones de nuestra fe cristiana para el testimonio por la paz en el mundo y para nuestro compromiso con el “[camino de la paz justa](#)”, e **insta** al CMI a ejercer su liderazgo, en cooperación con otros, a fin de convocar este diálogo.

Afirma enérgicamente el compromiso del CMI y sus iglesias miembros con la construcción de la paz mediante el diálogo y la cooperación interreligiosos a todos los niveles, como una contribución clave destinada a oponerse a las fuerzas de división, confrontación, polarización e injusticia, e **insta** al CMI y a toda la comunidad ecuménica a mantener y profundizar este compromiso.

Rechaza la polarización y la división de la comunidad humana y **reafirma** nuestra determinación de permanecer juntos como comunidad ecuménica, y de hacer frente a las amenazas y los desafíos a la paz, la justicia, la seguridad humana y la sostenibilidad medioambiental mediante el diálogo, el encuentro, la búsqueda del entendimiento mutuo y la cooperación, en vez de a través de la exclusión y la confrontación.

Pide a la comunidad internacional que preste un apoyo financiero y práctico mucho mayor a la construcción y el logro de la paz, en vez de optar por la división y la confrontación militar, y **subraya** el importante papel de las mujeres y los jóvenes como pacificadores, y de la transformación no violenta de los conflictos.

Reafirma la denuncia y el rechazo de la guerra por parte del movimiento ecuménico como algo contrario a la voluntad de Dios.

Llama a un cese al fuego a nivel mundial, como un imperativo moral urgente, en todos los conflictos armados del mundo, y a que las partes en conflicto emprendan el camino del diálogo y las negociaciones, y persistan en él hasta que se pueda lograr una paz justa y sostenible, renunciando a la guerra.

Exhorta a las iglesias miembros del CMI y a sus asociados a acompañar y apoyar activamente a las iglesias coreanas en su labor de promoción y defensa prosiguiendo el legado de la Asamblea de Busan, tal como se afirma en la [Declaración sobre la paz y la reunificación de la península de Corea](#).

Reconoce el [Artículo 9 de la Constitución de Japón](#) como un legado importante surgido de las cenizas de la Segunda Guerra Mundial, y un recurso único para la paz mundial. Alentamos a los cristianos y a todas las personas de buena voluntad del mundo a aunarse a los esfuerzos de las iglesias y la sociedad civil de Japón por proteger este legado, y recomendar este principio a otros países.

Exige un compromiso renovado del CMI y el movimiento ecuménico para reactivar la diaconía y responder a las emergencias y las necesidades humanitarias provocadas por la violencia y la inestabilidad en lugares como Etiopía, Nigeria, Camerún, la República Centroafricana, la República Democrática del Congo, Mozambique, Sudán, Myanmar, Sri Lanka, Filipinas y Papúa Occidental, así como para mostrar nuestra solidaridad cristiana con las iglesias y la población de todas las regiones y países afectados.

Reconoce el acompañamiento del CMI durante el proceso de paz y reconciliación en Colombia a través de [DiPaz](#) (Diálogo Intereclesial por la Paz en Colombia). Mientras el [nuevo gobierno](#) trae nuevas esperanzas para la continuación del proceso de paz, la Asamblea insta al CMI y la comunidad internacional a que reiteren su compromiso y solidaridad con el gobierno, las iglesias y los habitantes de Colombia y colaboren en el diseño, ejecución, promoción y financiamiento de la construcción de la paz en el país.

Pide encarecidamente apoyo para las iglesias y los habitantes de Siria, Cuba, Venezuela y Zimbabue ante la opresión que sufren estas poblaciones a causa de las sanciones internacionales que afectan a sus derechos humanos y su dignidad. Las iglesias han desempeñado un papel crucial trabajando por mejorar las relaciones a pesar de las limitaciones y los obstáculos causados por las sanciones. **Pedimos** que se retire a Cuba de la lista de países que auspician el terrorismo, y que se acompañe a las iglesias como voces proféticas de la paz, la esperanza, la cooperación y el respeto mutuo.

Invita a las iglesias miembros de la comunidad del CMI a que reflexionen y debatan en sus instituciones y entre ellas sobre las perspectivas y los principios cristianos con respecto a la doctrina de la disuasión nuclear.

Insta a todos los Estados que todavía no lo han hecho a que firmen y ratifiquen el [Tratado sobre la Prohibición de las Armas Nucleares](#), en especial los Estados bajo la protección de un paraguas nuclear y los Estados poseedores de armas nucleares que son el origen de esta amenaza mundial.

Exige el pleno cumplimiento de los compromisos contraídos en el marco de otras convenciones de desarme, especialmente el [Tratado sobre el Comercio de Armas](#), el [Tratado sobre la Prohibición de las Minas Terrestres](#) y la [Convención sobre Municiones en Racimo](#), así como la [Convención sobre Ciertas Armas Convencionales](#) y el artículo VI del [Tratado sobre la No Proliferación de las Armas Nucleares \(TNP\)](#) (que compromete a sus 191 Estados miembros — incluidos los cinco principales Estados poseedores de armamento nuclear— a celebrar negociaciones de buena fe sobre medidas eficaces relativas al desarme nuclear completo).

Manifiesta su firme apoyo a la prohibición preventiva mundial de los sistemas de armas autónomos (“robots asesinos” y drones) e **insta** a los Estados a que desistan de obstaculizar el avance de esta prohibición y a que participen en negociaciones de buena fe con este objetivo.

Denuncia el complejo militar-industrial que se aprovecha de los aspectos económicos de la guerra y la violencia, y la proliferación y exportación de armas, y **exige** una moratoria, y en última instancia el cese de la exportación de las armas y armamentos que avivan conflictos en todo el mundo.

Reclama la plena responsabilidad jurídica de todos los autores de crímenes de guerra, crímenes de lesa humanidad y otras violaciones graves del derecho internacional humanitario y las normas de derechos humanos —incluyendo los ataques contra la población civil y contra infraestructuras civiles, la violencia sexual y de género en los conflictos, el uso de los alimentos y del acceso a los alimentos, el agua y la atención sanitaria como armas de guerra, y cualquier uso de armas nucleares y de otras armas de destrucción masiva.

Denuncia todo caso de violación de la libertad de religión o creencias, y **afirma** la libertad de religión o creencias de todos los creyentes y no creyentes de todos los lugares, y el derecho a la objeción de conciencia en aras de un mundo pacífico.

Apela a aumentar considerablemente la inversión de los gobiernos y otros actores en los cimientos de la verdadera seguridad humana y la estabilidad mundial, incluyendo medidas urgentes para lograr la justicia climática y evitar la amenaza de un cambio climático catastrófico, y para promover una transición justa a la energía renovable, la eliminación de la pobreza extrema y el desarrollo sostenible, así como medidas para controlar la desigualdad generalizada (también mediante la justicia fiscal y medidas de reparación), pues todas estas cuestiones generarán conflictos si no se abordan.

Apoya los esfuerzos renovados para reformar y mejorar la eficacia de la ONU y otros instrumentos intergubernamentales a la hora de promover la paz y la seguridad humana, y **anima** al CMI a explorar las maneras en que las iglesias y el movimiento ecuménico puedan realizar una contribución significativa a este respecto.

Pide que se levanten las sanciones y/o se aborden las repercusiones negativas de tales sanciones sobre la gente común en países como Siria, Cuba, Venezuela y Zimbabue, y alienta a que se siga estudiando la eficacia de las sanciones internacionales contra los responsables de situaciones de violencia y opresión, y las repercusiones negativas de las sanciones que no son suficientemente selectivas sobre la gente común y sobre la respuesta humanitaria, el servicio social y la construcción de la paz —especialmente por parte de las iglesias y las organizaciones afines— en los países afectados.

Insta al CMI a que colabore con ACT Alianza y otros actores internacionales para apoyar los esfuerzos destinados a formular una nueva política internacional de reducción de daños que reemplace el paradigma militar de la “guerra contra las drogas”.

Sugiere que el CMI coopere con ACT Alianza y otros asociados ecuménicos, así como con la ONU e interlocutores de la sociedad civil, con el objetivo de fortalecer la capacidad de las iglesias de todo el mundo en materia de asesoramiento y apoyo psicosocial, especialmente en los lugares afectados por conflictos.

Ora por que el amor de Cristo lleve a este mundo sufriente y dividido a la reconciliación y la unidad, y por que todos los responsables de la violencia y la división se arrepientan de sus pecados y se impliquen en el restablecimiento de la justicia y la paz.

Background (for information)¹

Interstate conflicts and re-emergence of war

Among the nations, conflict and armed violence has continued to be a tragically prominent reality. The European region and historical moment in which the 11th Assembly convenes is particularly marked by the re-emergence of inter-state conflict on the continent of Europe due to Russia's invasion of Ukraine. Entailing terrible suffering for the Ukrainian people as well as for many more around the world, the war in Ukraine is massively compounding a global food and energy crisis, contributing to economic, social, and political instability in many places far beyond the borders of Europe, and provoking a renewed military confrontation between Russia and the West, raising again the spectre of nuclear war.

After a brief window of opportunity for peace was squandered, the Korean Peninsula - where the 10th Assembly met - has again slipped into renewed confrontation and escalating conflict risk.

Though the war in Syria has abated, peace, justice, and stability remain distant prospects for the Syrian people. The so-called 'Islamic State' - an empire of terrorist brutality - has risen and fallen, but with lingering consequences for human security and social cohesion in Syria, Iraq, the Middle East region, and the wider world. In Israel and Palestine, periodic outbursts of bloody violence - especially affecting the people of Gaza, as well as many others in the region - have occurred throughout this period, during which the military occupation of the Palestinian territories has continued and the longstanding demands for justice and equal human rights remained unfulfilled.

In South Sudan and Colombia, solemn commitments to peace have languished for lack of implementation.

The people of other priority countries for the Pilgrimage of Justice and Peace, such as Nigeria and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, have continued to be afflicted by persistent conflict, violence, and instability.

Moreover, new conflicts have emerged or escalated, in the anglophone region of Cameroon, in Yemen, and in Ethiopia - where fierce fighting has recently resumed between Ethiopian federal forces and the Tigray People's Liberation Front after a five-month humanitarian truce. And in Myanmar, the democratically-elected government was displaced by a military coup in February 2021, following which the people of the country have been subjected to increasing oppression, violence and displacement.

The situation in Kosovo and Metohija warrants closer attention by the WCC and the international community, and increased comprehensive protection of the Serbian Orthodox Church community in Kosovo and Metohija.

The spectre of nuclear war

Since the World Council of Churches' First Assembly in 1948 in Amsterdam - where the WCC described nuclear weapons as a "sin against God" and "a crime against humanity" - the WCC has consistently and continuously called for a world free from nuclear weapons. The victims of the terrible effects of the first and so far, only use of nuclear weapons in conflict - in Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945 - demand their elimination. Any use of nuclear weapons today would result in catastrophic humanitarian consequences to which no country would have adequate capacity to respond, and the consequences could not be constrained by national borders and would linger for thousands of years. Even if never again used in war, the effects of historic nuclear testing programmes on the health and environments of thousands, possibly millions, of people and their descendants in the Pacific region, Australia, the US, Algeria, Kazakhstan and elsewhere are grave and ongoing.

¹ **Antecedentes** (a título informativo), en inglés

Supported by the efforts of the WCC and its ecumenical, interfaith and civil society partners in the [International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons \(ICAN\)](#), the [Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons \(TPNW\)](#) was adopted by the United Nations in 2017, and entered into force in January 2021. States ratifying the TPNW accept that they are prohibited from developing, testing, producing, manufacturing, transferring, possessing, stockpiling, using or threatening to use nuclear weapons, or allowing nuclear weapons to be stationed on their territory. The TPNW has already created a new normative standard in international law that is on the way to delegitimizing the very existence of nuclear weapons, as well as introducing positive obligations for victim assistance and environmental remediation.

However, nuclear-armed states continue to maintain, develop, and increase their nuclear arsenals, other states still aspire to such weapons as the ultimate form of leverage in international relations, and ‘nuclear umbrella’ states continue to look to nuclear-armed allies as a key pillar of their security. But a security guarantee that threatens global devastation is illusory, illegitimate, and morally indefensible. Far from preserving peace and security, the mere possession of nuclear weapons serves to coerce and intimidate, to inflame tensions, and to facilitate aggression. The very existence of these most indiscriminately destructive weapons that human beings have ever created violates the fundamental tenets of the Christian faith. Such weapons are not safe in any human hands, and they must be eliminated.

Proliferation of weapons

In addition to nuclear weapons, the proliferation of other weapons in the context of conflict and escalating confrontation - including the uncontrolled spread of small arms and light weapons in communities - presents grave challenges for peace and human security.

Meanwhile, the development of new types of weapons and new theatres of conflict – such as autonomous weapons systems ([‘Killer Robots’](#)), drones and cyber-warfare – threaten a new and perilous global arms race.

Increased military spending inevitably comes at the cost of essential investment in peacebuilding, the elimination of extreme poverty, climate action, a just transition to renewable energy, and other investments in sustainable development and economic justice that are necessary for true human security and global stability. The direction of even more financial resources away from these purposes and towards the means of making war is self-defeating and unacceptable.

Polarization and division

Polarization, division, and exclusion is the antithesis of the purpose of the ecumenical movement. Accordingly, the worldwide ecumenical fellowship must actively and assertively resist all such forces of division and proclaim instead the reconciliation and unity to which the love of Christ calls us. In this historical moment and context, it is an urgent imperative of our Christian faith and witness in the world.

In 1948, the Amsterdam Assembly held that “[w]ar is contrary to the will of God”. In 1975, the Nairobi Assembly called on churches to “emphasize their readiness to live without the protection of armaments and take a significant initiative in pressing for effective disarmament.” In 1983, the Vancouver Assembly considered that the time had come when “the churches must declare that the production and deployment as well as the use of nuclear weapons are a crime against humanity.” In 2006, the Port Alegre Assembly affirmed the responsibility to protect, with the

prevention of assaults on individuals and communities its primary focus and recognizing that any resort to armed force represents a failure of that responsibility. In 2013, the Busan Assembly charted the “Way of Just Peace” and asserted that “[w]e must join other communities of faith and people of good will to... delegitimize the institution of war.” The direction of our collective ecumenical journey is abundantly clear, and it stands in stark and opposition to the direction of the world today.

Grave concerns are being raised in the ecumenical fellowship about the instrumentalization of religious language, authority and leadership to justify, support, or “bless” armed aggression, in sharp contrast to the Christian calling to be peacemakers and contradictory to core ecumenical principles. Consequently, a fresh and critical analysis – and deep and sustained dialogue - on these issues and on the Christian faith in its relation to politics, the nation and nationalism is urgently called for.

Reform of international governance for peace and security

The current constellation of conflicts and converging threats to peace and human security also demands serious re-examination of intergovernmental structures, policy and practice for the promotion of peace and prevention of war - including long-overdue reform of the UN Security Council.

The impotence of the post-World War II international security architecture when one of the five permanent members (P5) of the UN Security Council is the perpetrator of armed aggression has once again been thrown into sharp relief by the Ukraine conflict and inspired fresh calls for reform. Many previous attempts to reform the UN Security Council for greater inclusion and better effectiveness - and to prevent misuse of the veto power - have been signally unsuccessful. However, the recent initiative led by Liechtenstein requiring a UN General Assembly debate whenever a veto is cast in the Security Council represents a small sign of hope and applies a certain measure of accountability to veto-holding P5 members of the Security Council. While this initiative still falls short of the needed reform, it is a step in the right direction, towards a greater measure of justice in the UN's pre-eminent forum at a time when effective international governance for peace and security is most sorely needed and most seriously threatened.

Respect for and accountability to international humanitarian and human rights law is an essential foundation for international peace and justice. And yet states increasingly flout and undermine it or invoke it only in pursuit of their own perceived interests. States must re-commit to the universal and impartial application of these obligations, and the mechanisms of legal accountability to these principles must be strengthened.

Violations of international humanitarian and human rights law

In addition to the tragically frequent attacks on civilians and civilian infrastructure (including hospitals and schools) in conflicts during these years - affecting especially vulnerable populations, food or access to food is increasingly being used as a weapon of war. Moreover, anti-personnel landmines – which have continued to be deployed despite the Landmine Ban Treaty of 1997 – not only kill and maim indiscriminately and often long after conflict has ended, but also render productive agricultural land unusable and impede access to water sources in many affected rural locations. Cluster munitions - another indiscriminate weapons system banned by most countries - have also repeatedly been used in recent conflicts, with innocent children often the victims.

Violence against children

The elimination of violence against children, among the most vulnerable members of society and the hope for the future of our communities, has become an important priority for the WCC

following the mandate given by the Busan Assembly. In addition to violence suffered by children in the context of conflict, children face the threat of violence in their communities and even in their homes, with lockdowns during the Covid-19 pandemic having increased the salience of this threat and the incidence of such violence at home. The [Churches' Commitments to Children](#) have provided an important framework for ecumenical engagement in the elimination of violence against children, including through the role of churches in ensuring child-safe church environments as well as addressing violence against children in their societies and homes.

The role of women and youth in peace-making

Together with children, women are often the victims of armed conflicts instigated and perpetrated by men. Whether as victims of indiscriminate attacks, or targeted for sexual violence, or killed or maimed by the lingering detritus of conflict, women carry the burden of men's wars. Gender injustice continues to be widely prevalent, undermining the prospects of women and girls throughout the world. Despite important progress in some areas, women's human rights have been rolled back in others. Moreover, lockdowns in many countries during the Covid-19 pandemic exposed women and girls to heightened risks of domestic violence, and sexual and gender-based violence has continued to be an abhorrent reality in many societies and many contexts, including through the recurrent use of rape as a weapon of war.

However - as Pilgrim Team Visits undertaken in the context of the Pilgrimage of Justice and Peace have demonstrated - women have a powerful but under-recognized and under-supported agency as peacemakers. Likewise young people, who otherwise must fight and suffer the most direct impacts of the wars launched by their elders, should be given a much more significant space in the fields of peace-making and peacebuilding.

Governmental and intergovernmental actors, as well as churches and related organizations, must do more to support the role of women and young people as agents of peace. The international system has provided mechanisms by which to support this goal, including UN Resolution 1325 and the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Sanctions

In the experience of the WCC, sanctions and other coercive economic measures rarely achieve their stated purposes, and invariably do significant harm to the civilian population, especially women, children, and other vulnerable groups. Syria is an important case in point. International and unilateral sanctions are contributing to worsening the humanitarian situation, harming a civilian population already made vulnerable by war. Moreover, sanctions are damaging the historical multicultural and multireligious fabric of the Syrian society, forcing Christians and other indigenous groups to flee the country.

Together with Caritas Internationalis and World Evangelical Alliance, and in cooperation with ACT Alliance, WCC has commissioned a research project on the negative impacts of sanctions on humanitarian response, social service and peace-building in a number of affected countries. The results of this research project are awaited.

Trauma healing

The experience of victims of war and violence is often carried into the future through psychological trauma that may persist long after any physical wounds have healed. That trauma, especially if widespread in a conflict-affected society, may reduce resilience and predispose towards repeated cycles of violence. Intergenerational effects of trauma perpetuate the effects of war and violence. This vicious cycle must be broken by the healing of memories through psycho-social counselling and support, which churches have a powerful potential to facilitate.

Climate crisis and competition for essential resources for life

In humanity's relations with the earth, a crisis has become a global emergency, due to this generation's failure to recognize - let alone effectively address - the unprecedented threat of climate change, and to take the actions at governmental and societal level that are needed to avert it. The consequence of armed conflict, especially the current war in Ukraine, is driving the world even more rapidly towards the precipice of climate catastrophe, while undermining prospects for effective intergovernmental cooperation at the global level to change this suicidal course.

Concurrently, increasing levels of deforestation are weakening the Earth's own resilience and accelerating the disastrous rate of biodiversity loss, while environmental contamination by microplastics and chemical pollutants raises further concerns for human and environmental wellbeing. A deteriorating environment, and the diminution of Earth's capacity to sustain human communities, incidentally, increases the risks of armed conflict due to increasing competition for water, food, land, and other essential resources for life.

Economic injustice and inequality in the marketplace

Economic injustice, inequality and the gulf between the richest few and the overwhelming majority of others has become vastly greater, especially during the Covid-19 pandemic and more recently the war in Ukraine that have caused so much suffering for so many but during which the privileged few have earned exceptional windfall gains.

The [World Inequality Report 2022](#) demonstrates that the richest 10% of the global population currently takes 52% of global income, whereas the poorest half of the population earns 8.5% of it, and that whilst the poorest half of the global population barely owns any wealth at all - possessing just 2% of the total - the richest 10% of the global population own 76% of all wealth. Income and wealth inequalities have been on the rise nearly everywhere since the 1980s, have escalated significantly in more recent years, and currently stand close to early 20th century levels, at the peak of Western imperialism.

Such inequality is not inevitable, but a political and (im)moral choice, with grave consequences for social stability, peace and justice. Although agreement was reached in 2021 on a global minimum corporate tax rate of 15%, corporations and the wealthiest individuals routinely continue to avoid the redistributive mechanism of taxation through the widespread use of tax havens and other techniques. The appeal for tax justice goes largely unheard and unmet.